

## **PRIMARY RIGHTS**

*by Robert A. Monroe*

One of the biggest problems that confronts a culture that holds physical life very dearly is the desire NOT to live. A bad word: SUICIDE. We finally revoked laws against it. Certainly a no-win situation. If you're successful, you can't be bothered. If you fail, at the least, you're in the hospital (jail?) for extended psychiatric tests. Thus, if you're smart, you'll make every effort to succeed.

The paradox is that we recognize officially only one form of self-destruction—the one that is willful and evident. At last, there is a growing suspicion that there are literally millions of humans each year who self-destruct surreptitiously through nonconscious decision making. A secret death wish. Ask any family doctor; perhaps he'll give you an honest answer. Perhaps.

An illustration most evident is a friend who sold his successful business at age 67, then one year later suffered a stroke. Having survived that one, he developed abdominal cancer one year later and died. In between, he seemed happy and relaxed and showed no sign of any other desire but to continue living. His internal system (HM/IT?) [Human Mind/I-There] evidently was satisfied that enough was enough for this lifetime, and there was nothing his external HM or anyone else could do about it.

That's the way he explained it to me several months after his departure, at a non-physical Interstate meeting.

Most are much more obscure, these inner close-it-down decisions. Another friend had an unfortunate and mistaken lawsuit against him and his business which subtly took much of his reputation and many of his friends. His lifetime had been spent building up these two factors. He developed emphysema, which didn't kill him, so he picked up cancer, which did the job. Not consciously, but internally life wasn't worth living at that point.

A third friend reached a dead end in his career after 25 years and promptly contracted lung cancer. (Interesting doublespeak. With whom did he contract?) Nothing could prevent his passing on in this fashion. Still another died in his sleep from unknown reasons—but the business which he headed as president was failing through no fault of his own, and he had gone through a divorce within the previous year.

Take this overview and it offers much speculation as to the concept of physical and mental illness as we know it, and certainly brings to question the idea of maintaining a physical body

on expensive life-support systems when the former occupant may be gone and has no desire nor intention of returning (waking up).

Perhaps if a human desires to depart, consciously or otherwise, we should simply let him go. Anything else would appear to be a waste of time, money, and energy.

Once that inner option/decision has been exercised, there may be truly nothing that modern medicine can or should do.

Our D/O (Different Overview) states that we treat our pet animal friends much more compassionately. With great sadness, we have them “put down” if they are suffering from pain through incurable illness or accident. Perhaps their loss prepares us in a very small way for the big one—a beloved human in a similar condition.

A human is a different situation. As to putting someone “down,” is there a human now living who is totally competent to make such judgment for another, who has even the right to do so? How can we actually tell the difference from our current conventional perspective? We can and we can't.

The beloved can. A judge, jury, minister, or psychotherapist cannot.

Perhaps the nation should require a contingency fund contributed by each citizen to cover the cost of the burial or cremation of his leftover body when and if he departs, willfully or otherwise. Or at a minimum, an agreement that the body can be sold for parts.

Or perhaps this might be an area where we can just leave well-enough alone. The major restriction against more self-destruction is the common and inordinate fear of what is beyond death. If all of us knew for certain that no severe penalties would be imposed if we exited the kitchen when it got too hot, the present suicide rate might get severely out of hand. It's bad enough as it is (local judgment call?).

It also might negate the full commitment strength of the human learning process. Why would one bother applying an intense effort at solving a problem if he knew of a relatively easy cop-out?

On the other side—and this leans heavily against our social/philosophic concepts which inalterably call for the maintenance of life at any cost in any form—what about the pattern that literally millions of humans find themselves in in terms of the quality of life? These are the ones who admittedly or not are simply waiting around to die.

You don't have to look far to find them. Age in itself is not a factor, although most such cases are over sixty. Physical incapacitation is the most obvious, an extreme of this being the body in a coma on life-support systems in a hospital. But what about the guy whose entire life has

been in running as a star half-miler in track—and he loses both legs in a traffic accident. He knows nothing else and has no desire to be anything else even after years of therapy.

Who can possibly be a better judge than he as to his desire or need to continue his physical life!

Let's make it a little more obscure. Here is a man who spent the major part of his life as a steam locomotive engineer. Now, there are no more steam locomotives to operate, yet the only pattern he is totally experienced in doing, the only action he really wants to take is to be a steam locomotive engineer. From his perspective, his life is complete. For cultural reasons, he has to hang around and wait it out, doing and being in a life pattern in which he is incapable and never will be any better and one which is boring and totally distasteful.

What then? He is in a prison, living out his sentence. He doesn't state it that way, but deep within himself he knows this to be true. He is a prisoner in the belief systems of his "civilization," which doesn't permit the torture of its citizens, not even for a noble cause, yet fails to recognize this as a form of slow torture.

Why does he live out his incarceration? For the same old stuff, reasons ingrained in him since birth, in repeated summary, probably in this order of importance:

1. Survival imprint. This First Law of the ELS (SURVIVE AT ANY COST, IN ANY FORM) comes with the territory and is present in every living structure in the ELS, including human, and is tightly aimed at physical survival of the species. The distortion of this basic genetic command is the primary source of most, if not all, human problems. Stay alive in a physical mode even if it is unbearable. That's the ELS (Earth Life System) law.
2. Fear of the unknown. He has received so many mixed-up and contradictory signals during his lifetime—from his religions, from his own experience, even from philosophers who should know better—that he has no sure knowledge of what to expect if he checks out of the physical—if anything.
3. He doesn't know of a way to change over that wouldn't be painful, messy, and an embarrassment to family and friends. Just the contemplation of the prospect leaves him with a sense of guilt.
4. It used to be against the law, man-made law, to "take" your own life. It's still against "moral" law.
5. It would be interesting to see the result if each and every one of the constraint were totally removed so that not a trace existed. Man might reach a state of understanding far beyond where he is now if this near-impossible task were achieved.

Still, there are signs of a growing change worldwide in the old perspective. One doctor offered a "suicide machine" for use by patients with terminal diseases. You lie down, push a button and chemicals gently lead you off into the THERE. At least three persons have used it

successfully, and the doctor was brought into court on manslaughter or murder charges. Change? He was acquitted, but his license was revoked in one state.

For several years, the Hemlock Society has quietly offered instructions on gentle departure to those terminal cases who desire it. Then, books outlining such methods in detail were published and one became a bestseller, also with much of the familiar controversy.

Cases formerly kept secret are beginning to emerge into public awareness—where loved ones assisted the passing of a pain-racked patient at the request of the latter. Some doctors and hospitals have had such a policy in place for many years. They even give it a code so no one gets nervous or intrusive when it starts. If questioned, they have of course denied it.

A “living will” is accepted in most of the United States that eases the legality of such actions.

What if: such persons had as a Known, not a belief or a hope or faith, that the Basic did exist, that they knew where they were going and what they would do and be when they died? What if everyone had such knowledge?

Is it so impossible?

*[Excerpted from Ultimate Journey]*

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